

VZCZCXRO6845
RR RUEHCHI RUEHCN RUEHDT RUEHHM
DE RUEHJS #0098 2950932
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 220932Z OCT 09
FM AMCONSUL SURABAYA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0477
RUEHJA/AMEMBASSY JAKARTA 0466
INFO RUEHJS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0213
RUEHWL/AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON 0180
RUEHJS/AMCONSUL SURABAYA 0489

UNCLAS SURABAYA 000098

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR EAP/MTS, EAP/PD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: BALI'S JEMBRANA REGENCY: A MODEL OF EFFICIENCY

Summary

1. The Regency of Jembrana is recognized as a model for decentralization by prominent Indonesian media outlets, including Tempo. On a recent trip by Chargé d'Affaires Ted Osius to Jembrana, Jembrana's Regent, Prof Winasa, demonstrated the Regency's use of technology to improve operational efficiency and reduce opportunities for corruption. Through savings resulting from improved efficiencies and reduced corruption, the Regency has offered increased social services to its residents. End summary.

Context

2. Jembrana Regency has a population of 220,000. It is located in the western part of Bali and consists of 51 villages. The Regency's capital is Negara. Unlike Bali's tourism centers, the economy is primarily agricultural, although the Regency is also home to Bali's primary fishing port and a bustling ferry terminal linking Bali to East Java. Prof Dr. Drg.I. Gede Winasa, Regent of Jembrana, was elected Regent in 2000 and re-elected in 2005 with 88% of the vote, a record percentage for any election in Indonesia.

Chargé Osius Visits Jembrana Regent

3. On a recent visit to Jembrana by Chargé d'Affaires Ted Osius, the Regent noted that inefficiency is itself a form of corruption. To raise efficiency in the Regency, he has focused on standardization of operations and processes through technology. For example, Jembrana is the first in Indonesia to implement touch-screen voting machines for their elections. Time clocks for government employees use biometrics (fingerprints) as a way to ensure employees are on-the-job. The Regency has also established a central command center where officials can connect immediately by video-conference to all schools and offices in the Regency. SMS (text messaging) systems are employed as a way for constituents to contact the government and for the government to send mass communications to Jembrana residents. This system would prove valuable during an earthquake or other emergency.

Less Opportunity for Corruption

4. Standardized operating procedures and the use of technological advancements have helped the Regency reduce opportunities for corruption. For example, all construction permits are submitted through an automated system in which the person responsible for reviewing permit applications is unknown to the applicants. This greatly reduces the possibility of bribery and collusion. The Regency waiting room uses a computerized system so that no one can pay to move to the head of the line. These simple process improvements have significantly reduced the opportunities for low-level corruption.

Real Changes in People's Lives

15. The results of the Regency's operational improvements are seen in all facets of people's lives. Since 2002, the Regency has supplied free schooling for all children in the Regency through 12th grade. The Regency supplies free basic health care services to the population through the hospital and several clinics. The PAD (regional revenue), which is derived primarily from the collection of regional taxes, for Jembrana has increased from 2.3 billion Rp. per year to 8.5 billion Rp. per year during Prof Winasa's tenure. Jembrana used the authority provided by decentralization to make practical changes and improve the quality of life of its residents.

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